

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-04 PRS-01 INR-10 SS-20 RSC-01 DRC-01

/052 W

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R 280046Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO USIA WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1335

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

UNCLAS TAIPEI 1905

USIAC

FOR: IOR/MEDIA REACTION; IEA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TW

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT

1. SUMMARY - ENGLISH LANGUAGE CHINA NEWS, WHICH GENERALLY REFLECTS OFFICIAL THINKING, IN LENGTHY MARCH 27 EDITORIAL UNDER HEADLINE "CONTINUING COMMITMENT" SAID IF ANYONE CAN FILL AMBASSADOR MCCONAUGHY'S SHOES "HE IS LEONARD UNGER." TEXT FOLLOWS.

2. "AMBASSADOR WALTER MCCONAUGHY IS LEAVING FOR RETIREMENT AND AMBASSADOR LEONARD UNGER WILL BE TAKING HIS PLACE.

3. THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA IS FORTUNATE THAT THE CHANGE DOES NOT SIGNAL ANY DETERIORATION IN THE QUALITY OF TOP LEVEL AMERICAN REPRESENTATION.

4. AMBASSADOR MCCONAUGHY HAS BEEN A GOOD FRIEND. HE HAS ALSO BEEN AN ABLE PROFESSIONAL IN THE FIELD OF DIPLOMACY.

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5. HE IS RESPECTED BOTH IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND ON CAPITOL HILL. HIS TESTIMONY BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES HAS ALWAYS BEEN FAIR TO THIS COUNTRY.

6. ALTHOUGH PAST THE AGE OF RETIREMENT, AMBASSADOR MCCONAUGHY STAYED ON TO SERVE HIS COUNTRY AND BECAUSE HE KNOWS THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND EAST ASIA SO WELL. HE IS THE ONLY U.S. DIPLOMAT TO HAVE HELD FOUR ASIAN AMBASSADORIAL POSTS.

7. AMBASSADOR MCCONAUGHY WILL BE MISSED. YET IF ANYONE IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT CAN FILL HIS SHOES, HE IS LEONARD UNGER.

8. AMBASSADOR UNGER HAS HAD SUCCESSIVE APPOINTMENTS IN LAOS AND THAILAND BOTH AT A TIME WHEN THOSE COUNTRIES WERE UNDER THE GUNS OF COMMUNIST AGGRESSION.

9. HE, TOO, IS AN ASIAN SPECIALIST. HE, TOO, IS AN OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMAT. WE HAVE EVERY REASON TO ADJUDGE HIM FRIEND.

10. THIS CHANGE OF AMERICAN AMBASSADORS IS NOT ROUTINE.

11. WASHINGTON HAS ENTERED UPON A PROGRAM OF "RELAXING TENSIONS" WITH THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS. PRESIDENT NIXON TRAVELED TO THE CHINESE MAINLAND. THE UNITED STATES HAS A LIAISON OFFICE IN PEIPING AND THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS HAVE ONE IN WASHINGTON.

12. SOME OBSERVERS HAVE MAINTAINED THAT U.S. DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION OF THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS IS INEVITABLE. WE DO NOT THINK SO, BUT OUR VIEW IS ADMITTENDLY PREJUDICED. EVEN IF WE EXPECTED THE WORST, WE COULD SCARCELY ADMIT IT.

13. NOW WE HAVE STRONG EVIDENCE THAT THOUGHTS OF GOING FURTHER WITH THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS ARE NOT NOW IN THE MINDS OF PRESIDENT NIXON AND SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER.

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14. IF THE UNITED STATES HAD ANY SUCH INTENTION, AMBASSADOR UNGER WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO TAIPEI. THE AMERICAN EMBASSY COULD HAVE BEEN LEFT UNDER A CHARGE D'AFFAIRES OR A NONENTITY DISPATCHED TO SUCCEED WALTER MCCONAUGHY.

15. POSSIBLY AMBASSADOR MCCONAUGHY WAS KEPT IN PLACE SO LONG BECAUSE THE UNITED STATES WAS WAITING FOR CHINA EVENTS TO SHAPE UP.

16. WITHIN THE LAST YEAR OR SO, IT HAS BECOME CLEAR THAT THE INSTABILITY OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST REGIME IS BEYOND CORRECTION.

17. POWER STRUGGLE RAGES ON TO DETERMINE WHO WILL RULE WHEN MAO TSE-TUNG HAS VANISHED FROM THE SCENE. THE DESTRUCTION OF CHINESE CULTURE CONTINUES.

18. THE UNITED STATES HAS ITS OWN SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON THE CHINESE MAINLAND. AMERICAN LEADERS KNOW THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE MAINLAND HAVE BEEN DEEPLY ALIENATED FROM THE PRESENT SYSTEM AND REGIME BY THE MOVEMENT TO CRITICIZE CONFUCIOUS.

19. WE THINK WE KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN ON THE MAINLAND. THE PEOPLE ARE GOING TO TAKE MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS AND GET RID OF THE COMMUNISTS.

20. THE UNITED STATES MAY NOT AGREE WITH US COMPLETELY. THERE ARE MANY POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR THE MAINLAND STORY DURING THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

21. HOWEVER, THE AMERICANS WHO KNOW CHINA AND ASIA ARE AS SURE AS WE THAT MOMENTOUS CHANGES ARE IN THE WORKS. WHATEVER THE FINAL RESULT, THE MAINLAND OF THE END OF THIS DECADE WILL BE VERY DIFFERENT FROM THAT AT THE START OF THE PERIOD.

22. THE UNITED STATES IS WISE NOT TO COUNT OUT THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND ITS CHANCES OF RETURNING LEGITIMATE SOVEREIGNTY AND CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT TO THE CHINESE MAINLAND IN THE YEARS JUST AHEAD.
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23. OUR WISH FOR AMBASSADOR UNGER IS THAT HE MAY PRESIDE OVER RESTORATION OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN NANKING IN A CHINA UNITED, FREE AND AT PEACE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, AMBASSADORS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TAIPEI01905
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740068-0763
From: TAIPEI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974036/aaaaafoz.tel
Line Count: 159
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 JUL 2002 by elbezefj>; APPROVED <12 DEC 2002 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEDIA REACTION REPORT
TAGS: PFOR, TW, (UNGER, LEONARD), (MCCONAUGHY, WALTER)
To: USIA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005